JMC 2300

Principles of Journalism

This course is designed to acquaint you with the concepts and functions of journalism in American society, including the underlying principles of journalism. The course will highlight the values of journalism, its distinctive public service mission and its adaptation to the digital age.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:
• demonstrate a conceptual understanding of journalism and news values
• trace the evolution of journalism as a profession, and its role in a democracy
• discuss the guiding ethical principles of journalists and the profession
• outline press freedoms as upheld by current U.S. First Amendment law
• outline the basic tenets of U.S. law on copyright, defamation and freedom of information
• understand the professional obligations journalists must meet in serving American society
• understand the daily pressures practitioners face in a rapidly changing digital delivery environment

Required materials

Turning Point Cloud account (a.k.a. “clicker”)
The Wall Street Journal
• Read it at the main library or the business college library

Course requirements
Your grade will be based on the following:
Tests (three including the final) 60 percent
Pop quizzes 20 percent
News quizzes/attendance 10 percent
Elevator pitch 10 percent

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Wed. 2 - 3 p.m.

Department info
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## Tentative lecture and reading schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Textbook Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Jan. 16/18</td>
<td>Course overview</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Jan. 23/25</td>
<td>The Mirror, The Watchdog and the Marketplace</td>
<td>Principles Ch. 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Jan. 30/Feb. 1</td>
<td>What is journalism?</td>
<td>Principles Ch. 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Feb. 6/8</td>
<td>How is news made?</td>
<td>Principles Ch. 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Feb. 13</td>
<td>The elements of journalism</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Feb. 15</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Feb. 20/22</td>
<td>Who pays for journalism?</td>
<td>Principles Ch. 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Feb. 27/March 1</td>
<td>New voices, new models</td>
<td>Principles Ch. 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>March 6/8</td>
<td>Digital disruption, elevator pitches</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>March 20/22</td>
<td>What do journalists owe us?</td>
<td>Principles Ch. 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>March 27/29</td>
<td>The foundations of free expression</td>
<td>Principles Ch. 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>April 3</td>
<td>Copyright</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>April 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>April 10/12</td>
<td>Open government</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>April 17/19</td>
<td>Race, gender and human rights</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gender and race in the newsroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>April 24/26</td>
<td>A declaration of journalistic independence</td>
<td>Principles Ch. 8</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>April 27 5 p.m.</td>
<td>Group presentation materials due</td>
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(This may be modified over the course of the semester.)

### Tests

This class has two “midterms” and a cumulative final. The exams will consist of a mix of short answers and multiple choice drawn from lectures, readings and relevant news stories. There will be no news or pop quizzes on test days.

Missing class means your test will be recorded as a 0 unless your absence is approved in advance by the professor or TA. Makeup exams for approved absences must be scheduled and taken on the first possible weekday following the exam.
Attendance and reading the news

You are expected to attend and be prepared to participate in every class session.

Since this is a class about journalism, it’s impossible to understand what we’re talking about without consuming the news daily. For that reason, you’re expected to be on top of current news about media and politics as represented in The Wall Street Journal, one of the world’s best news sources. (It’s also a place where many past University of Iowa students have interned and worked.)

To kill two birds with one stone, each class session will begin with a short, 5-minute news quiz taken via clicker which also serves as a check on your attendance. The material will be taken from the coverage of media and politics in the Wall Street Journal.

Missing a class, being late or leaving early means your quiz will be recorded as a 0 unless your absence is approved in advance by the professor or TA.

Unprofessional behavior such as disrespecting your colleagues or disrupting class also will result in that day being recorded as a 0.

Excused absences

You have two no-questions-asked “PTO” days. Just email the professor before class and you are automatically excused.

Other than your PTO days, you will can be given excused absences for school-related travel, unavoidable Daily Iowan reporting assignments, hospitalization, religious holidays, weather or other absences that are automatically approved under university or college policies. You must notify the professor of these in advance via email.

No retroactive excused absences will be given. Even if you’re not sure if it will result in an excused absence, email me. It’s polite.

Pop quizzes

Starting in the second week, there will be 10 short “pop” quizzes via clicker on material covered in recent readings or class sessions. Each will consist of five questions on material from recent lectures and that day’s assigned readings. This will be done immediately following the news quiz.

Grades

This class is graded on a +/- basis without A+. Grades are rounded to the nearest 0.1 percent by ICON. For journalism majors, this class must be passed with a C- or better in order to continue in the major.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94% - 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90% - 93.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87% - 89.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84% - 86.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80% - 83.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77% - 79.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74% - 76.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70% - 73.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67% - 69.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64% - 66.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60% - 63.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>less than 60%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Missing that days class or being late means your quiz will be recorded as a 0 unless your absence is approved in advance by the professor or TA. (see above)

**Elevator pitch**

A major goal of this course is to understand the changes and opportunities the digital economy has brought to journalists and news organizations. For that reason you will work with a small team to develop an “elevator pitch” as though you were seeking startup funds for a company to develop a new news site or news product.

A detailed rubric of the presentation, slides and supporting materials will be provided. The group will give the presentation during the final week of classes in front of a group of outside experts. The group the judges think had the presentation will earn 2.5 points of extra credit.

You will have the option to form your own teams, and otherwise membership will be assigned. Team members who do not, in the opinion of the professor and TA, pull their weight will have their grade on the assignment reduced or even zeroed out

**Extra credit**

Journalism is a participatory activity, so taking initiative outside of class can earn a small amount of extra credit in recognition of active participation in student journalism groups, work for campus-based media or attendance at specific journalism-related events.

Details will be announced in class. Typically, participation will net 0.5 to 1.0 points.

Approved student groups are the Online News Association, ED on Campus, the National Association of Black Journalists and Public Relations Student Society of America. Approved campus-based media organizations are The Daily Iowan, DITV, KRUI, Fools Magazine and IowaWatch.

**Resources**

There is a guide to library resources for this class: [http://guides.lib.uiowa.edu/journalism](http://guides.lib.uiowa.edu/journalism)

There are copies of our textbook and other course materials at the SJMC Resource Center, Adler Journalism Building room E350. [https://clas.uiowa.edu/sjmc/facilities/resource-center](https://clas.uiowa.edu/sjmc/facilities/resource-center)

Students may find the Speaking Center very useful, especially for the elevator pitch. [https://speakingcenter.uiowa.edu](https://speakingcenter.uiowa.edu)
The Writing Center (https://writingcenter.uiowa.edu) and the Tutor Iowa site (https://tutor.uiowa.edu) can also be valuable for students seeking extra help.

For help writing in your journalism classes, you can also get help from the Writing Assistance program at the SJMC Resource Center E350 Adler. https://clas.uiowa.edu/sjmc/facilities/resource-center#guidelines

School of Journalism and Mass Communication Learning Goals

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is committed to your academic and professional success. In line with this commitment, we have identified particular learning outcomes that every student should obtain by the time they earn their degree. You can find more information about these learning outcomes here: https://clas.uiowa.edu/sjmc/undergraduate-programs/sjmc-assessment-plan.

We regularly assess the curriculum to determine whether students are achieving these outcomes. This course contributes to these learning outcomes by introducing elements of the law & ethics, media literacy and media history goals. Achieving these outcomes means the ability to:

• demonstrate knowledge of the history of the First Amendment and awareness of the rights protected by the First Amendment in different media contexts. (Law & Ethics Learning Objective No. 1)

• demonstrate knowledge of the main areas of media law, including libel, invasion of privacy, obscenity, commercial speech, intellectual property, and the freedom of the press. (Law & Ethics Learning Objective No. 2)

• demonstrate critical thinking skills to analyze and interpret media messages through an understanding of media practices and institutions. (Media Literacy Learning Objective No. 2)

• demonstrate knowledge of technological innovations in print and electronic communication and their impact on media publishing industries for mass audiences, showing an awareness of their distinct political, social, and economic contexts and uses. (Media History Learning Objective No. 1)
CLAS Teaching Policies & Resources

Administrative Home
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall, or see the CLAS Academic Policies Handbook at https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook.

Electronic Communication
University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences (Operations Manual, III.15.2).

Accommodations for Disabilities
The University of Iowa is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (which includes but is not limited to mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related conditions). A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet with the course instructor privately in the instructor's office to make arrangements. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between the student, instructor, and SDS. See https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/ for information.

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom
The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, racial, religious or other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University’s Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, diversity@uiowa.edu, or visit diversity.uiowa.edu.

Academic Honesty
All CLAS students or students taking classes offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College's Code of Academic Honesty: "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the IOWA Challenge. I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any
student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

**CLAS Final Examination Policies**

The final examination schedule for each class is announced by the Registrar generally by the fifth week of classes. Final exams are offered only during the official final examination period. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. All students should plan on being at the UI through the final examination period. Once the Registrar has announced the date, time, and location of each final exam, the complete schedule will be published on the Registrar's web site and will be shared with instructors and students. It is the student's responsibility to know the date, time, and place of a final exam.

**Making a Suggestion or a Complaint**

Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit with the instructor (and the course supervisor), and then with the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

**Understanding Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

**Reacting Safely to Severe Weather**

In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Department of Public Safety website.